

## **PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Regular Meeting via ZOOM App

Wednesday May 13, 2020

7:00 PM

**Committee Members Present:** Alderman Joseph DeLucia, Alderman Mark Bettencourt and Alderman William Nash.

**Committee Members Absent:** None.

**Administration and Staff Present:** Mayor Peter Nystrom and City Manager John Salomone, City of Norwich; Eric McDermott, Norwich Public Utilities; Chief Patrick Daly and Captain Jim Veiga, Norwich Police Department.

**Volunteer/Central Fire Departments and Others:** Norwich Chief Keith Wucik; Taftville Chief Timothy Jencks and Yantic Chief Frank Blanchard.

**Citizens Present:** None.

- I. **Call to Order and Quorum:** Alderman DeLucia called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM. There was a quorum present.
- II. **Citizen Comment:** None.
- III. **New Business:**
  - a. **Department Updates:**
    - i. **NPU Update:** Eric McDermott reported that NPU remains working and responding from home per their pandemic plan and they have developed a return to work plan following the Governor's guidance. Eric McDermott stated the reservoir levels are at 100% and that NPU is currently not conducting any flushing activities. Eric McDermott stated the connection from Leffingwell to Route 82 was complete and the activation should occur in the next few weeks.
    - ii. **American Ambulance** Robert Rautio reported 563 emergency responses over course of the past month which is a remarkable decrease from the previous year and a 148 decrease in calls from the 5 year average down. Robert Rautio stated the types of calls have remained stable just less calls overall. Robert Rautio stated no American Ambulance responders were ill or in quarantine. Robert Rautio Stated AA is operating at full staff as they brought on additional 6 staff members so far and plan to bring on 10 more next

month.

- iii. **Police Department Update:** Chief Patrick Daley reported 2350 calls for service in the past month including 69 arrests and 68 motor vehicle accidents one of which was fatal and two being DUI accidents with significant damages. Chief Daly stated one officer just came off of and another is currently going on flexible time off. Chief Daly stated the police academy is still completely virtual with three recruits utilizing the distance learning at the Norwich station. Chief Daly reported that social distance complaints have increased with the good weather, as people try to gather, which NPD is doing as much as possible to address. Chief Daly stated the radio system is close to being complete with about half of the fleet installed and that NPD is currently operating on both the old and new system though they are trying to primarily utilize the new system. Chief Daly added that the Orchard Street tower was also close to completion. Chief Daly stated NPD continues to operate at a Level 1 state of readiness in responds to COVID. Chief Daly stated while there are no COVID cases in the department the lobby is still closed to the public per the government's orders. Chief Daly stated NPD is working to determine how finger printing will fall into the new orders but he believes they will still not be conducting them at this time. Chief Daly reported the new cars and cruisers are on order just backlogged due to COVID. Alderman Bettencourt asked if officers had been given directives in regards to social distancing. Chief Daly stated NPD is trying to avoid arrests so they are utilizing the 'warn and warrant' approach as to not inundate the court system with additional cases. Chief Daly stated the Governor does not want police departments to issue citations. Chief Patrick Daly stated NPD is working to maintain the balance of enforcing the governor's order to keep citizens safe while also maintaining positive community relations. Chief Daly asked for patience from all during this time.
- iv. **Emergency Management Update:** Chief Keith Wucik stated Emergency Management had been quite busy and thanked Jason Balletto for his help. Chief Wucik reported the EOC is still at partial open status and they are in constant communication with other state agencies in regards to COVID. Chief Wucik stated that Emergency Management just received the EMPG grant and reported that Josh Pothier had requested that whomever purchases PPE during this time to please scan and email him their receipts in order to be reimbursed as he is unsure how much longer the PPE and funding from FEMA will be available.

v. **Fire Department Updates:**

- **Taftville:** Chief Timothy Jencks reported 49 calls for the month of April which is lower than average with it being a split between fire and EMS calls. Chief Jencks attributed the drop in EMS calls to COVID and reported some inconsistencies from dispatchers where Taftville was sent to calls where they may have not been but that they are working through it. Chief Jencks stated their trucks had been going down to garage for DOT inspections. Chief Jencks stated the Rescue Truck should have been delivered April 12<sup>th</sup> however the truck is being built in Florida where COVID has caused major delays. Chief Jencks stated he did not have solid dates yet but has received weekly updates from the manufactures. Chief Jencks reported that Taftville is still fully staffed aside from 3 members whose workplace instructed them refrain from volunteering until the quarantine is over.
- **East Great Plain:** None.
- **Occum:** None.
- **Yantic:** Chief Frank Blanchard reported all apparatus were in service and membership was steady with no COVID cases in the department. Chief Blanchard stated all members were following executive orders and guidelines set force by the Governor. Chief Blanchard stated the work at the fire station was ongoing with a July 1<sup>st</sup> date for the Fire Marshall abatement to be complete. Chief Blanchard reported the Sunnyside Bridge project was also ongoing with 4 road closures so far and that things are set to wrap up around September so their spare apparatus will remain on the opposite side of the bridge until then. Chief Blanchard stated Yantic still collecting PPE from state agencies and that their call volume was also down due to American Ambulance taking over a majority of EMS Calls.
- **Laurel Hill:** None
- **Norwich:** Chief Keith Wucik also reported a decrease in calls with 165 in the last month and an 80 call decrease in relation to EMS calls. Chief Wucik reported Squad A as a critical need and that Norwich has one vacancy in staffing due to retirement. Chief Wucik stated that all employees are being scanned for

temperature readings at the beginning and of each shift and that no members are on quarantine or self-isolation. Chief Wucik stated that company training is ongoing but outside only. Chief Wucik reported Norwich performs daily training and is receiving updates on COVID as they come out from state and Uncas Health Department. Chief Wucik asked if anyone has concerns with NFD personnel or actions that they contact him directly opposed to contacting the Mayor's office. Alderman DeLucia recommended that concerns go through the City Manager's office before reaching out to the Mayor. Discussion ensued.

IV. **Next Meeting:** June 10, 2020, via ZOOM App

V. **Adjournment:** Upon a motion by Alderman Bettencourt, seconded by Alderman Nash, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:29 PM.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Katherine Rose*

**Addendum to the Wednesday May 13, 2020  
Regular Public Safety Committee Meeting  
at 7:00PM held virtually via ZOOM.**

EGPVFD Report – May 2020 (via email)

Here is my report for May:

1. EGP had 36 emergency responses for the month of April. We haven't had that few of calls in I'm not sure how many years. I can't even tell when that happened last. Alot of it has to do with the virus and people not calling 911.
2. The apparatus had routine maintenance.
3. Our ladder truck should hopefully be back in a few weeks. it's currently getting repainted and lettered. After that, it has some minor work that needs to be completed.
4. The new truck is still in South Dakota. We have been battling with the company over some issues that we found during our final inspection trip a month ago. The issue was resolved earlier to day. It should be fixed and hopefully leaving some time next week. Need to have radio's and equipment installed when it arrives here in CT.
5. EGP is currently good for PPE for the virus. We are receiving PPE weekly from the State.
6. No members have been isolated and/or quarantined
7. The members are currently disinfecting the apparatus and station on a daily basis.
8. Members are still continuing with online training, but we are hoping to get back to our regular training by the end of the month.
9. EGP will be implementing a new accountability system when we resume our normal training's. This is the system that the City FD has and uses for their members.

I believe that is all for now.

Thank you

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Keith Milton  
Chief  
East Great Plain